Washington State Court System, 1998

THE SUPREME COURT

Nine justices (elected to six-year terms)

- Appeals from the Court of Appeals
- Direct appeals when action of state officers is involved, the constitutionality of a statute is questioned, there are conflicting statues or rules of law, or when the issue is of broad public interest.
- Final rule-making body for other state courts
- Administers state court system
- Supervises attorney discipline statewide

THE COURT OF APPEALS

21 judges (elected to six-year terms)

Division 1, Seattle 10: Division II, Tacoma 6; Division III, Spokane 5

Appeals from the lower courts except those in jurisdiction of the Supreme Court

THE SUPERIOR COURTS

167 judges (elected to four-year terms in 30 judicial districts, each composed of one or more counties)

- Exclusive original jurisdiction in all civil matters involving a dollar amount over \$25,000; title or possession of real property; legality of a tax, assessment or toll; probate and domestic matters
- Original jurisdiction in all criminal cases amounting to felony
- Original jurisdiction in all criminal cases when jurisdiction is not otherwise provided for by law
- Exclusive original jurisdiction over juvenile matters
- Orders for protection from domestic violence
- Appeals from the courts of limited jurisdiction heard de novo or appealed on the record for error of law

THE COURTS OF LIMITED JURISDICTION

215 judges; 204 attorneys and 11 non-attorney (113 district court judges, elected to four-year terms, and 102 municipal court judges*)

DISTRICT COURTS

MUNICIPAL COURTS

50 courts established by 39 counties in 62 locations

134 courts established by cities

104 municipalities contract for services from district courts and

28 violations bureaus are maintained

- Concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts in all misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor actions with maximum fine of \$5,000 or less and/or jail sentence of one year or less in violation of state county or county/municipal ordinances
- Jurisdiction in all matters involving traffic, non-traffic, and parking infractions
- Orders for protection from domestic violence
- Civil antiharassment matters
- Civil impoundment matters (municipal court jurisdiction expanded to include these matters previously heard only by district courts; effective June 11, 1998).
- Concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts over civil actions involving \$35,000 or less** (increase from \$25,000 effective July 27, 1997).
- Small claims up to \$2,500**
- Preliminary hearings of felonies**

Judges may sit in multiple municipal courts.

** District courts only.